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BOOK REVIEWS

AUTHORITY IN THE MODERN STATE. By Harold J. Laski. New Haven. Yale University Press. Pp. 398. 1919.

The Great War, which has so profoundly stirred up the masses against the classes, and which has everywhere raised up prophets of a new democracy, is calling for a revaluation of all our social and governmental institutions. In particular, a new interpretation of the limits of political authority in the State, and of its correlative, political obedience in the citizen, is needed. This new interpretation Mr. Laski undertakes to give in the book which lies before us.

What is the State? A being, a conception apart from its members? A will apart from the will of the individuals composing it? No, says Mr. Laski, such a conception of the State will inevitably confuse State-will with the will of those who hold in their hands the government, and the government has always been in the hands of those who wield and monopolize economic power. Therefore, concludes Mr. Laski, "a democratic society must reject the sovereign state as by definition inconsistent with democracy." Our author does not deny that the State is, and must be, invested with sovereign power, but, after all, he insists, the State is but one of the many forms of human association. Certain moral feelings, certain forms of economic activity are too sacred, too vital to the "good life" to be submitted to the external compulsion of the State. In these activities, e. g., churches, or trade-unions, the State must stand neutral, and the neutrality can only be brought about by the withdrawal of these spheres of action from the domain of the State. There must be a division of power between the State and other forms of association. "There is a clear tendency upon the part of industrial and professional groups to become self-governing." Give us, then, not centralization but federalization of power, says Mr. Laski; for "to make the State omnipotent is to leave it at the mercy of any group that is powerful enough to exploit it" (p. 385).

The book is a valuable contribution to the theory of the State.

But to our mind its chief interest lies in the very full, and altogether admirable, discussion of the works and theories of the great French writers on Church and State of the nineteenth century, such as Bonald, Lamennais, Royer-Collard, Brunetière, and Bourget. Mr. Laski has thoroughly familiarized himself with the personalities and the writings of these great Frenchmen; he devotes three of his five chapters to them, and nowhere can a student of French political theory more profitably turn than to these chapters. Mr. Laski has the gift of epigrammatic style and striking illustration.

S. L. WARE.

WORLD-POWER AND EVOLUTION. By Ellsworth Huntington, Ph.D., Research Associate in Geography, Yale University. New Haven: Yale University Press. Pp. 285. 1919.

Dr. Huntington's book gives an excellent and original treatment of the intimate relation between business and health, and between health and climate, and leads up to a consideration of their influence in the World War and the practical application of the results of favorable climate to nations in the future.

Economic causes alone are not sufficient to account for the instability of business conditions, for back of these we find a mental attitude which expresses itself in conditions and which is a reflection of the state of health through which a people have just passed. Variations in the health of a people follow variations in climate after the lapse of a short period of time. Climate probably was an important factor in the evolution of both the animal world and of the human race. The changes from aquatic to amphibian modes of life, from amphibian to terrestrial, followed definite changes in climate. Periods of climatic stress and climatic variability as experienced during certain geological periods, apparently brought about the development of the warm-blooded animals, better able to withstand the changing conditions of the air. Laboratory experiments upon animal forms show that the effect of climatic change is to produce mutants, some of which are able to transmit their peculiarities to their descendants. These conditions which have influenced the production of mutants in the animal world have been at work producing various types of man, each a product of the peculiar climate in which